

HISTORY OF BRITISH MUSIC - ~~THE PERIOD 1848-1900~~

1848 - 1900.

By

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Chapter IThe English Musical Scene in 1848.

The year 1848 opened gloomily, with forbidding facts and worse forebodings. So far as Britain was concerned the Chartists in England, the famine and rebellion in Ireland and a general fear of war with France darkened the air, ~~while~~ ~~Abroad~~ things were even worse.

Yet of all this not a trace was reflected in British music, which was then at its lowest point - sentimental, facile and imitative. Of its former assets all that remained were the Cathedral tradition; the tenacity of life of such institutions as the Philharmonic Society, the Royal Academy of Music, the Three Choirs, Norwich and Birmingham Festivals; a few secondary composers, a fair number of British-born singers with remarkably fine voices, and a public with an immense capacity for appreciating foreign music and musicians. This last, ~~had~~ once ~~been~~ a virtue (when English music lovers

were quick to welcome the new works of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven) ~~but~~ had ^{by} now become a vice. Also a curious and characteristic perversity, a profound inertia and prejudice operated where most British work was concerned. ~~On the other hand,~~ One has but to read those two Victorian novels woven around music, "Charles Auchester" and "The First Violin" to see with what a halo of romance foreign music was invested in English eyes.

Frankly, there was considerable reason for it. Great artists travelled Europe freely in their starry progresses. Mendelssohn, the Prince Charming of Music and the "Seraphael" depicted in "Charles Auchester", was as wellknown in England as in Germany. ~~He composed~~ His finest work ("Elijah") ^{was composed} for the Birmingham Festival of 1846. Liszt, Joachim, Thalberg, Piatti and Rubinstein had made their first appearances in London. Patrons of the Italian Opera were already familiar with a galaxy of such superlatively fine singers as Grisi, Pauline Viardot-Garcia, Persiani, Mario, Rubini, Lablache and Tamburini. Jenny Lind had taken London by storm the year before. Memories of Malibran were still vivid; so too were recollections of the wizard-like violinist Paganini. Chopin had visited England, and came again in this very year of 1848. Berlioz had been over to conduct in 1847, ^{though} ~~but~~ without any particular success,

^{while}
~~However~~, Spohr, regarded to-day as a chromatic bore, was
 courted and acclaimed on his frequent visits to England.
 Of the resident conductors ~~who~~ ^{the} bulkiest most in the public
 eye three were foreigners. ↵

^{join on} Julius Benedict (1804-1885), a German who settled
 in England in 1835, is dimly remembered now by his opera
 "The Lily of Killarney" (1862). He was ~~the conductor~~ in
 command at Drury Lane Theatre when Bunn was bringing out
 the best of Balfe's operas, and by 1848 Benedict had been
 appointed conductor for some of the most important musical
 fixtures in the country, including the Norwich Festival, a
 post he held from 1842 to 1878. One of these Festivals fell
 in the very year 1848, and became mildly historic because the
 young English tenor Sims Reeves, who ^{had} made his debut in
 London the year before, was recognised at Norwich as being
 of front rank, ^{Reeves} ~~but~~ remained untitled. ^{to his death (but)} Benedict was, of course,
 eventually knighted. Among the celebrations of his 70th
 birthday in 1874 he received a testimonial from his English
 friends "in appreciation of his labours during forty years
 for the advancement of art". But he had certainly not
 advanced English music.

Sir Michael Costa (1808-1884) was another foreign
 conductor and composer - an Italian this time - occupying a
 key position. He had come here in 1829. By 1848 he was

firmly established as conductor of the Philharmonic Society, ^{having} ~~and had~~ routed the gentle Sterndale Bennett in ^{the} ~~a~~ quarrel that led the latter to resign from all offices with the Society. Costa also conducted the Sacred Harmonic Society, and was appointed conductor of the Birmingham Festival in 1849 - a post he naturally retained until 1882. From contemporary critiques it is clear he was a fine orchestral trainer; as a composer his music testifies to his mellifluous style; but nothing remains to indicate he tried to further British music.

The third conductor most in the public eye at the mid-century was a Frenchman names Louis Antoine Jullien (1812-1860) ^{the possessor of} ~~who possessed~~ a talent for publicity that could have given points to Hollywood. Surprisingly enough, he had been connected with an attempt to found an English opera at Drury Lane and during the few years the enterprise lasted foreign operas had been sung there in English; also "The Maid ^{Fresh} of Honour" by Balfe had been produced. ✓ Jullien's London ~~seems~~ ^{is} ~~is~~ ^{immensely} remote from us. We look back upon the throng of glittering foreign ^{artists} ~~presence~~, and see them surrounded by admiring audiences — ^{(The ladies} ~~glittering~~ ^{shining} clad in full-flounced dresses, real lace berthas, ~~glittering~~ coronets, turbans or poke bonnets, and the men in impossible-seeming trousers beneath ~~the~~ coats and waistcoats ~~so~~ quaintly cut. A world of roses and camellias, fans, parasols, paper-lace edged cards whereon were collected the

autographs of Crisi, Mario and the rest; a world where an enthusiastic young bride on her honeymoon would drag her unmusical spouse to the Italian Opera as the great treat of the wedding trip; a world in which Jullien's sets of Quadrilles, composed by himself, were "all the thing", and where he could give monster performances, and plan yet bigger ones.— "Six grand musical fêtes with 400 instrumentalists, three distinct choruses and three different military bands." Such proceedings ought to call down our censure, yet somehow a liking for Jullien creeps over ~~one~~^{us}. His Promenade Concerts were, after all, the prototype of the beloved "Proms" to-day. In pursuing his aim of popularising music he invariably secured the finest performers; he introduced works of the finest calibre; and, most remarkable of all, he cheerfully threw away fortune after fortune in carrying out his enterprises. The difference between Sir Julius Benedict and Jullien can be crystallised into this - that Benedict was willing to interpolate "God Save the Queen" into the middle of a Beethoven symphony when a Royal Duke arrived late, but that Jullien, if conducting anything by Beethoven, did so with "a jewelled baton and a clean pair of kid gloves handed to him at the moment on a silver salver". To-day we smile at the idea of anyone conducting in white kid gloves, but there was

more sense in it than appears. Under old-time lighting conditions the white gloves aided visibility; they might even serve the same purpose in the Royal Albert Hall to-day.

Among such colourful foreign personalities, their British contemporaries look lustreless. The Irishman Michael William Balfe (1801-1870) was the most brilliant, a musician saturated in opera as a singer, conductor and composer, who in 1848 was in charge at Her Majesty's Theatre in succession to Costa, ~~and who had~~ ^{and who had in 1843, had} produced his immensely successful opera "The Bohemian Girl", ~~in 1843~~, containing - incidentally - his most famous song "I dreamt I dwelt in marble halls". Balfe's melodic abundance and sure sense of ~~the~~ ^{effect} stage, offset his weakness in other directions, and out of his twenty-eight operas "The Bohemian Girl" is said to survive to this day among amateur operatic societies. In later life Balfe ~~became~~ ^{became} bucolic and died a gentleman farmer.

The other most successful British opera composer before the public in 1848 was another Irishman, William Vincent Wallace (1812-1865), whose "Maritana", produced at Drury Lane in 1845, survives in much the same way as Balfe's "Bohemian Girl", but his "Lurline" (said to be as good or better than "Maritana") has become a mere name. Neither

Balfe, Wallace, nor those lesser operatic composers Edward James Loder (1802-1865) and John Barnett (1802-1890) did anything towards the British Renaissance. Largely known in their own day, they are now largely unknown. This, to some extent, is also true of two very serious and, one fears, musically dull British composers, Robert Lucas de Pearsall (1795-1856) and Henry Hugo Pierson - born Pearson (1815-1875), who both felt themselves out of sympathy with England and retired to their musical spiritual home in Germany.

Among the church composers Sir John Goss (1800-1880), Thomas Attwood Walmisley ^(1814 - 1856) Sir Frederick Arthur Gore-Ouseley (1825-1889) and Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1810-1876), only Wesley stands out as a commanding figure, though Ouseley, in quiet saintliness, was later to found St. Michael's College, Tenbury, for the nurture of church music.

Wesley and Sir William Sterndale Bennett (1816-1875) are the ~~only musically notable figures~~ ^{Sole English composers} of 1848 whom time has not turned ashen grey. ^{What a pair they were - Wesley the warrior - Bennett the} Wesley, ~~some~~ ^{and had for father a man} of a race of great minded ^{Bennett the} Christians and bonny fighters, with a father who, besides ^{pacifist} being a fine composer and the greatest English organist of his day, had done more than ~~any other man~~ ^{anyone else} to make J.S. Bach's music known in England. Samuel Sebastian possessed his father's gifts in a yet stronger degree. His works are a precious heritage for Anglican music. Such anthems as "Wash

me thoroughly", "O Lord thou art my God", "The Wilderness", "Ascribe unto the Lord", "Blessed be the God and Father", and above all the exquisite "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace" have entwined themselves in the very soul of England. If S.S. Wesley occasionally conceded so much to the common man as to compose the popular hymn "Aurelia", which calls forth the unthinking affection of countless churchgoers, he was, after all, giving the mass of people something they could sing well. The comfort with which a congregation settles into singing "The Church's one foundation" is worth ~~noting~~ considering.

~~The other English figure of 1848 who in a sense still~~
~~lives~~ is Sterndale Bennett, born of a musical family at Sheffield in 1816, ~~his~~ early ~~years~~ gave promise of exceptional ~~abilities~~. ~~Schumann~~ Schumann, no mean judge of men, wrote of Bennett as "a very delightful individuality not a Beethovenian one, drawing years of strife after it, no Berlioz preaching revolution with heroic voice and spreading fear and destruction around, but rather a gentle, quiet spirit that labours on high, no matter how storms gather below him, like an observer of the stars". But Schumann and Moscheles both put their fingers on Bennett's weakness when - as Moscheles pithily wrote in his diary - "It sounds like

Mendelssohn, it must be Sterndale Bennett"! Only too true! Bennett's best things, ~~was~~ all written in his youth, ^{all of a Mendelssohman,} ~~and were either of a~~ Fairy sort or delineations of Nature. His charming ~~limpid~~ mind was devoid of the macabre element ~~that~~ permeated ~~ed~~ many Romantics abroad; but it was also unfortunately devoid of the power of literary criticism. While his early works, notably the orchestral Overtures to "Parisina", "The Naiads" and "The Wood Nymphs", ~~together and with~~ his piano pieces, are still capable of pleasing, his cantata "The May Queen" (1858) is completely outmoded by its more than Victorian libretto. From his oratorio "The Woman of Samaria" one number, "God is a spirit", alone survives. Bennett's vital contributions to English music as a composer, ^{though they live,} practically ceased before he was thirty and even those ~~had~~ in them no life-transmitting power. But from about 1844 onwards he endowed English music with his own life, expending upon his work as a teacher, administrator and conductor the forces which might otherwise have vitalised his own composition. One of his finest achievements was the foundation, in 1849, of a Bach Society "to collect Bach's works and all biographical material relating to him and his family in a library of reference for the use of members; and to further acquaintance with his works by their performance".

It was under Bennett's direction that Bach's "St. Matthew Passion Music" was first performed in England on 6th May, 1854. That is a landmark in English musical appreciation and ~~education~~^{enlightenment} only rivalled later by the first performance of the B Minor Mass on 26th April, 1876 by the Bach Choir founded for that express purpose by an amateur (A.D. Coleridge). What J.S. Bach has meant ^{since in the education of} ~~in educating~~ musicians can never be computed; but from Wesley and Sterndale Bennett onwards he has been an integral element in the English musical mind. ~~To~~ Take two examples only: love of Bach's music was a profound passion with Sir Hubert Parry, one of the leaders of the English musical Renaissance; and to-day, when the "St. Matthew Passion Music" is given by the Bach Choir, the Royal Albert Hall in London is sold out weeks ahead, notwithstanding that it seats thousands of people.

In 1858 Sterndale Bennett was offered the conductorship of the Gewandhaus concerts in Leipzig - a staggering compliment to an Englishman at that time - but he "resisted all temptations to belong to other nations" and remained to carry on his English duties, which were increased in 1856 by the conductorship of the Philharmonic Society, and the Professorship of Music at Cambridge. He was now irrevocably involved in that English academic musical life which, like a

kindly octopus (if there be such a thing) gradually tightened its tentacles on artists, strangling their creative powers. Though he gave up the Philharmonic Society in 1866 he merely exchanged one exacting post for another ~~for~~ more exacting, this time the Principalship of the Royal Academy of Music. He took it at a ^{moment} ~~time~~ when the Academy, which had weathered one financial crisis after another since its foundation in 1822, was in a bad way. The following year, in 1867, it nearly gave up the ghost ^{altogether} on the withdrawal by Disraeli (then Prime Minister) of the small grant made under Gladstone's Government. The professional musicians, with Sterndale Bennett at their head, ^{waged} ~~put up~~ a long and desperate struggle. They emerged victorious and saved for Britain one of its greatest centres of music and a powerful factor in the Renaissance-to-be. Thus it ~~is~~ is not so much in Bennett's compositions as in the man himself, in his unwearying and ungrudging work for music, in his integrity ^{and} his high ideals, that his greatest services to the Renaissance ^{reside} ~~lie~~; they are not to be seen by the world but surely they are not forgotten under the eyes of God.

No-one surveying ~~that~~ ^{which} scene in 1848 could have guessed the resurgence of British music ^{the} second half of the century was to bring. But we, by the television of history, can ~~see~~ ^{look}

into the homes where already some of the leaders in the movement were living. One was a young engineer of twenty-eight named George Grove, at this time working under Robert Stephenson on the erection of the Menai Bridge. Another was August Manns, a young Prussian of twenty-three, bandsman in a regiment stationed at Posen. The others were of ~~far~~ more tender years: Arthur Sullivan, age six, in London; Walter Parratt, age seven, in Huddersfield; Alexander Campbell Mackenzie, age one, in Edinburgh; and Charles Hubert Hastings Parry, born in this very year 1848. The other leaders were not to come till after the turn of the half-century - Charles Villiers Stanford born at Dublin in 1852 and Edward Elgar, born at Broadheath near Worcester in 1857.

Chapter II

The Main Span from 1848 to 1900 and the Renaissance

Why the Renaissance in British music should have begun just when it did is not readily understandable. Perhaps it is not understandable at all ^{Save} ~~on~~ on metaphysical grounds, for it seems possible that until the love and comprehension of music among the men and women in this country had reached a certain degree of expansion there could be no release of creative energy strong enough to produce a great school of composers. For creative art requires a responsive atmosphere in which to function and is in itself a response to love and belief.

So long as the Victorians regarded music mainly as an elegant entertainment, composers of genius were not likely to arise. But about the middle of the 19th Century a change began which gradually turned the superficial valuation of music into a belief in it as something cardinal to the spirit of man - a something in which (as a recent writer has well said) "the great artists of the world have by the magic of their genius interpreted the meaning of the Vision as truly as the most subtle theologian. Through their work the light of the One illuminates the world of the many".*

*From "The Timeless Moment" by Warner Allen.

If it is not easy to say why the Renaissance began when it did, neither is it easy to trace the elements which contributed to its growth and character. The multiplicity of causes and effects is bewildering. So many musicians were at work, so many new musical undertakings were launched between 1848 and 1900, that it is ^{more than} ~~very~~ difficult to marshall them in a short, complete and lucid narrative. At first sight a chronological narration seemed the best solution. But the slow pace of chronology, its over-lappings sideways and the disproportion ~~which~~ which we can now see ~~between~~ between the really great men and the lesser labourers who looked so imposing in their own day, all these things - combined with the long delay for readers - pointed towards a "Groups and Persons" method, in which the main elements of musical activity during the period ^{could be} ~~are~~ sketched, a number of musicians ~~are~~ presented briefly and the greatest leaders of the Renaissance, Parry, Stanford and Elgar, ^{he} ~~are~~ given the lion's share of attention. A gentle progress, in fact, from the general to the particular. ^{considers} The more one ~~thinks~~ of the Groups the greater seems their number, But not all were causes of the Renaissance; some were ^{its} ~~are~~ effects and others were revitalised by it. Church music belongs to the latter order.

Fresh par.

Church Music.

For centuries Church music was the sole constant musical factor in Britain, and the Cathedral tradition, which developed along lines unlike those anywhere else in Europe, ~~besides being~~^{is} singularly suited to the cool, devout detachment of Anglican ritual, ~~is~~^{besides being} one of the chief glories of our artistic heritage. But it must be admitted that, with the single exception of the short break caused by the Puritans in the 17th Century, the Cathedral tradition never fell so low as during the third quarter of the 19th Century. Popular taste, which in secular music found gratification in drawing-room ballads and pretty piano pieces, fastened on the most tuneful elements it could find in religious music. This was as true of the Church of England as of the great choral movement connected with the Nonconformist places of worship. All met in a common liking for obvious rhythms and melodious progressions in hymn tunes.

John Bacchus Dykes (1823-1876) had so great a gift for writing these that it almost constituted a kind of small genius. Along with that volume of Hymns Ancient and Modern which Dykes had largely inspired, the Victorians took his hymn-tunes to their hearts, and even to-day they retain some

hold on public affection. If asked to pick out the typical "classics" of Victorian hymnology, one would unhesitatingly say "Lead, kindly Light" by Dykes, "Onward, Christian Soldiers" by Arthur Sullivan, and "Aurelia" (best known as "The Church's one foundation") by S.S. Wesley. Similarly, Church of England clergy and congregation liked to have the services and anthems of a straightforward, pleasing sort. In Joseph Barnby (1838-1896) and G.M. Garrett (1834-1897) there were the very men to supply them. Garrett infused a gentle poetry into his wellknown Service in E flat. Walmisley's Service in D minor is *still* worth ~~mentioning~~ *hearing*.

Sir John Stainer (1840-1901) was a far finer musician than either, a pioneer in the musicological exploration of the mediaeval music of Dufay and his contemporaries, and a composer whose own music has been happily described by Dr. Percy Scholes as "better Victorian". Some of it remains in use to-day, including an anthem, the Sevenfold Amen, and his most popular work, "The Crucifixion".

Of Sir Frederick Gore-Ouseley (1825-1889) it may be said that his music was "best Victorian" by reason of its fine craftsmanship and high purpose. Though much performed during his life it is now practically forgotten. Both

Stainer's and Ouseley's most lasting work for music was done outside composition. In 1854 Ouseley's noble foundation of St. Michael's College, Tenbury for the education of boys in music and general knowledge made a landmark in the Renaissance of religious music. Stainer became the first organist of that College, and many years later, on Ouseley's death, he succeeded him as Heyther Professor of Music in the University of Oxford, where Ouseley had also done notable work by reforming and raising the status of University music. Stainer maintained this higher standard, and his musical research work, his foundation in London in 1875 of the (now Royal) Musical Association, and his simple but sensible textbooks are deeds which any musician might be glad to have to his credit.

As the 19th Century progressed, its religious music began to glow with the inspiration of the Renaissance. In hymnology such a splendid tune as Joseph Parry (1841-1903) gave to the world in his "Aberystwith" would have been unthinkable in the 1840's.

But the man who above all others influenced the course of Church music, both by his own playing and through his pupils, was Sir Walter Parratt (1841-1924). For long years, to

the benefit of all concerned, he held the distinguished office of organist of St. George's Chapel, Windsor; the other most ~~prominent~~ ^{distinguished} organistship in the Kingdom, that of Westminster Abbey, was held during much the same ~~long~~ period by Sir John Frederick Bridge (1844-1924). If two musicians were picked to typify the Renaissance and Victorianism in music a better couple could hardly be found. Bridge had a big fund of musical dexterity, an easy acceptance of what would now be called the common man's tastes in music, a sincere though superficial bent for musical research, an engaging knack of putting things over in popular form, and an inveterate habit of humour which became second nature. He always enjoyed a joke, even when against himself. If not cast for the role of a great reformer, he did, in some surprising way, help to nurture useful enterprises, to eliminate some of the less desirable ^{ones}, and to further the cause of popular musical education.

~~Sir John~~ Parratt was a remarkable contrast. Tall, spare, extraordinarily energetic and resilient, with upright thick hair, keen blue eyes and a little pointed beard like an Elizabethan, his mind and talk had a truly Elizabethan wealth of culture - witty, brilliant, sarcastic, yet endlessly kind,

and persuasive when he wished. There was a touch of Elizabethan Puritanism too in his organ playing which shaped it to clear-cut lines and reticent colourings like those of an English Cathedral. His whole attitude towards music was that of a consummate master who deliberately laid aside everything savouring of virtuosity or self-aggrandisement to serve more perfectly the great music he loved - above all Bach's. ^{Under his direction} ~~the services at St. George's~~ ~~under his direction~~ were models of restrained beauty. As a teacher he was supreme. From him there flowed an influence which brought Cathedral and Church music out of the easy complacencies and popularities of Victorianism into strong beauty and dignity in worship, and his pupils carried this tradition all over Britain as, one after another, they won the highest posts in the country. Indirectly too the presence of such a man in music influenced the ^{quality} ~~kind~~ of music composed for Cathedral use. When ^{Parratt} ~~he~~ was appointed Heyther Professor of Music at Oxford in 1908, Sir Hubert Parry said of him "I don't know which way the honour goes. Oxford University is a great institution but Walter Parratt is such a unique person that he confers honour even on a place like Oxford by accepting the Professorship". There was never ^{a touch} ~~anything~~ of the pedant

about him. He watched new organ music as it was published, ^{and} welcomed ~~all~~ all the best. He was as conversant with literature as with his own art and did much to broaden his pupils' outlook by encouraging them to read widely. Little wonder they look back to him with love and something like homage. His ashes rest in St. George's Chapel, close by the stairway to the organ loft his swift-moving feet had climbed such countless times. The sad thing is that as Parratt had no special gift as a composer ~~something~~ ^{to come} generations will never know this great Englishman and great musician as his contemporaries knew him, and as they will be able to know Parry, Stanford and Elgar from their works.

So far as ^{The Renaissance} ~~composition~~ was concerned the real landmark in Anglican church music was placed by Stanford in 1879 with his fine Service in B flat, now used throughout a large part of the world. Stanford's ideals in church music were as lofty and pure as Parratt's, and having genius ^{both} as a composer and ^a teacher he was able to express them and to hand them on to his pupils.

By a singular coincidence these three men ~~Bridge, Parratt and Stanford~~ all died within a few days of each other: Bridge on 18th March, Parratt on 27th March and Stanford on 29th March, 1924.

Opera.

Opera has been current in England, roughly speaking, for three centuries. During that period attempts to found a national school and to perform opera in English ~~were~~^{were} made at intervals with the admirable persistence of Bruce's spider, but only recently can the spider be said to have ~~made~~^{effected} a lodgement - if, indeed, it has, which time alone can show. Even in the wonderful years from 1848 to 1900 when music was rising in a spring flood, Britain did not, ~~until~~^{can} till near the end, ~~produce~~ produce any composers whose operas ^{can} command the stage to-day, with the ^{even -} sparkling exception of Sullivan's light ones, which still retain their power to please.

~~As to~~ ^{of Grand Opera} The Victorian opera seasons at Covent Garden, ~~the~~ sumptuous but foreign, Italian or International, ~~and~~ did next to nothing for British art or artists. Of the three most successful composers of popular, ^{as distinguished from} ~~opera~~ Grand Opera, two were Irishmen (as indeed was Sullivan) and only Edward James Loder (1813-1865) was an Englishman, gifted with a limpid talent. Michael William Balfe (1808-1870), best remembered by his "Bohemian Girl" (1843), had a singularly successful, not to say sumptuous career both here and on the Continent, but his operas founded no school. William Vincent Wallace (1812-1865), who also had the secret of pleasing his

public, made his name with "Maritana" (1845), the opera by which he is recalled to-day, but again, here was a man who founded no school or tradition. However, in 1856, one of the perennial attempts was made to establish opera in English. Louisa Pyne, a singer, and William Harrison founded a company to perform British works, among them being Balfe's "Satanella", Wallace's "Lurline", and George Alexander Macfarren's "Robin Hood". The enterprise held together for eight years and then dissolved. Nevertheless it may be regarded as an early effort towards the Renaissance in opera.

There can be no doubt of the value of what happened in 1875. Carl Rosa, a German violinist and impresario, founded a company for the production of opera in English. As a touring organisation it took on a sort of permanent existence, carried a knowledge of the foreign stock repertory all about the country and produced new operas by British composers, among which the best remembered are "The Canterbury Pilgrims" (Stanford), "Colomba" (Mackenzie), "Esmeralda" and "Nadeshda" (Coring Thomas, 1850-1892). Stanford and Mackenzie must be discussed later - so too must Sullivan - but a little pause should be made to look at Coring Thomas's charming talent. ^{Here was} ~~He had~~ a light touch in composition and a flair for the stage. His

nation. But his ^{instinct for} ~~instinct for~~ the stage was not so lively as Sullivan's, and his delightful opera "Shamus O'Brien" (produced in 1895) was the only one to make a genuine success at the time, ~~as~~ ^{and to be revived later} to have a real run of performances in the 19th Century. Yet as a vital force in the Renaissance Stanford was powerful where Sullivan was inert, and ^{his} ~~Stanford's~~ ^{the importance of} prescience over opera set him two generations ahead of his time.

Festivals. Had the big festivals any influence upon the Renaissance? ~~big festivals have not been regarded~~ On the whole, they have ^{not been regarded} as either generators or encouragers of genius, ^{and alas!} ~~too~~ many instances come to mind of mediocrity in the new works produced, or of apathy towards the genuinely fine ones. But the record is not so black as some people would believe ~~when one remembers that~~ the Three Choirs Festival (Gloucester, Worcester and Hereford) founded in 1715 is still very much alive and ~~that~~ during that period 1848 to 1900 it gave Parry and Elgar their first big chances as young composers; Parry's "Scenes from Shelley's 'Prometheus Unbound'" (Gloucester, 1880), and Elgar's Overture "Froissart" (Worcester, 1890) were both landmarks in the Renaissance. More, the stretch of country

music so exactly matched the taste of his period that its quick success was as inevitable as its eclipse to-day. ^{yet even now} ~~The~~ ¹ ~~very~~ names of his best operas, "Esmeralda" (1883) and "Nadeshda" (1885) seem to carry with them a romantic and graceful fragrance.

^{For George Thomas} ¹ ~~to~~ make an independent success with opera at this period in England was ~~something of an~~ ^{not a mean} achievement, for Sullivan was at the height of his powers and "The Mikado" actually came out in the same year as "Nadeshda". Sullivan, however, was not content with light work; ^{he hankered} ~~and decided~~ to write serious opera. ^{and the opportunity came with} ~~The public's growing interest appeared to justify this and D'Oyly Carte's foundation of the Royal English Opera House. This~~ ~~It~~ opened in 1891, and on ~~the~~ first night Sullivan's "Ivanhoe" met with ^{an} approval that seemed to promise ^{a lasting} success. Unfortunately Sullivan had not the instinct for grand opera, and though "Ivanhoe" ran for 160 nights it ~~then~~ retired ~~then~~ into a shadowy existence from which it has ~~not~~ ^{never} re-emerged. Nor was a successor found for it; the expenses of the Opera House were more than D'Oyly Carte could bear; and ^{so} ¹ yet another attempt at national opera came to an end.

Charles Villiers Stanford, like Sullivan, had spent some of his student years in Germany and had become imbued with a belief in opera as essential to the musical life of a

voices, and an orchestra of six hundred players dwarfed the soloists to a fantastic degree, while the moments of splendour obtained in some of the great choruses hardly compensated for the ~~appalling~~ ^{appalling} lack of balance. To-day these Festivals are regarded as the model and monument of Victorian bad taste. yet Their ancestry ~~is~~ can be traced to the 18th Century semi-mammoth performances of Handel's music in Westminster Abbey which Dr. Burney recorded; and though the ~~Victorian~~ ^{19th century} Handel Festivals hardly affected the British Renaissance one way or the other they gave hundreds of amateur singers and players the chance of taking part in great music alongside professional musicians - a "daring joy but safe", ^{since} ~~the~~ the contributions of the weaker brethren went practically unheard in that vast sea of sound while they had the exhilarating experience of swinging with its tides - an experience not to be despised from an educative point of view.

Quite another kind of Festival, however, ~~which~~ came into being in 1882, ^{and} had an incalculable influence upon the general musicalness of England. This was the Competition Festival, pioneered ^{by John Spencer Curwen and - later -} by a fine amateur musician, Augusta Mary Wakefield. Her Festivals at Sedgwick in 1885 and Kendal ^{became} in 1886 were landmarks in amateur choral singing, and the model for a great movement.

from which the Three Choirs Festival sprang and from which most of its performers and audience were drawn cradled both Parry and Elgar, as later it nurtured Vaughan Williams, Holst, Howells and Gurney. Such a concentration of genius cannot be merely accidental. Nor perhaps is it mere chance that Benjamin Britten comes from the sphere of influence of the Norfolk and Norwich Festival founded in 1770, nor that Delius grew up at Bradford within the circumference of the Leeds Festival, which was held triennially from 1858. The Birmingham Festival, curiously enough, seems to have had little to do with the Renaissance, though it existed triennially from 1768 to 1912. Its great historic event was the first performance of Mendelssohn's "Elijah" in 1846. That was neither a cause nor an effect of the Renaissance, though possibly it was a handicap upon the development of a genuinely British style in music.

The Triennial Handel Festival, begun experimentally at the Crystal Palace by the Sacred Harmonic Society in 1857 and carried on, with intermissions, well into the 20th Century, was a dubious boon. For many years it was conducted by Sir Michael Costa; August Manns took it on at short notice in 1883, and the final conductor was Sir Henry Wood. The immense spaces of the Centre Transept, the gigantic choir of

Concerts, Entertainments and Analytical Programmes.

Hitherto no-one seems to have noticed that the beginnings of the British Renaissance and the first use of analytical programme notes at concerts approximately coincided. Of course, one thing may not have the slightest bearing on the other, but it is worth pondering that the analytical notes admitted the general public to the art and craft of music in a way hitherto unknown here, though it had been tried in Germany during the 18th Century. In England it was first suggested in 1836 by a minor composer and writer named C.H. Purday, ~~who~~ His suggestion remained as such until Thomson, the first Reid Professor of Music in Edinburgh, put it into practice for the Edinburgh Professional Concerts in or before 1841. John Ella followed in 1845 when he founded his Musical Union in London. These famous concerts lasted till 1880, and ^{from} ~~and~~ the real landmark. Ella was a Yorkshireman who, besides being a violinist, had studied composition with Attwood (thus becoming a musical grandson of Mozart) and with Fétis in Paris. He designed his concerts to be of an all-round excellence, ^{devoting them} ~~and they were devoted~~ to the finest chamber music performed by the best artists. The programmes, with Ella's analytical notes, were circulated several days ahead of each concert, thus allowing his patrons to arrive well

informed on what they were to hear and free to listen intelligently without feverishly chasing printed clues or disturbing their neighbours by turning crackly, rustling pages. Ten years later, in 1855, two series of music makings began which embodied two differing conceptions of what music should be - an entertainment or an expression of the spirit of man. On the one hand there were the German Reed Entertainments at St. Martin's Hall, Long Acre, ^{designed} ~~started~~ by German Reed and his wife, ^(to give good dramatic prices for people who objected to theatre going) and directed by the ~~Reeds~~ ^{Reeds} so intelligently that in 1867 they gave Arthur Sullivan his first ^{big} ~~real~~ chance in what proved to be his true sphere of action by producing his operetta "Box and Cox". From this he went forward to ^{his} ~~that long line of~~ light operas which are masterpieces in the art of entertainment, and which have delighted English-speaking millions all over the world.

On the other hand, the famous Crystal Palace Saturday Concerts were founded which, conducted by August Manns, did more for British music of the highest sort than can ^{ever} ~~possibly~~ be reckoned. The Crystal Palace had begun its career at the Great Exhibition of 1851 under the fostering care of the Prince Consort. When the immense glass and girder building was re-erected at Sydenham and opened in 1854, the music performed there under the direction of a bandmaster called Schallehn

was as unsatisfactory as himself. But it was the immense good fortune of the Crystal Palace to have at that time as its Secretary a young engineer called George Grove. On the Directors deciding to dismiss Schallehn, Manns, who had already held the post of sub-conductor, was appointed in his place and from then onwards the Palace concerts never looked back. Grove and Manns were the ideal collaborators^z—both filled with a burning love and enthusiasm for the finest music, and both practical idealists of boundless energy. How they looked in youth I do not know, but in late middle life and ⁱⁿ age, with their silver hair, bright complexions, keenly radiant eyes and determined mouths, they were unforgettable. Neither could be overlooked in any company, though both were ~~rather~~ short men.

Manns started the concerts from scratch. At the outset he found no orchestra, no library, no concert room nor musical audience. What he did find was a deep-rooted prejudice against classical instrumental music. He felt his way patiently, pluckily, perseveringly. For the first concert on Saturday, 20th October, 1855, he put down short works by Beethoven, Weber and Mendelssohn, and among lighter things included - fine judge that he was - a Waltz by Strauss. By next year, when the birthday of Mozart was to be celebrated

Manns asked Grove to write "a few words about Mozart himself, and about the works to be performed". Thus began the renowned series of programme notes which, in conjunction with the fine performances secured by Manns, had a lasting influence upon all who came within their sphere. Step by step Manns and Grove built up a first-class full orchestra, which played together practically every day; a library was amassed covering an amazing range of musical works; a large concert-room was constructed inside the Crystal Palace; and a large audience supported the concerts steadily for several decades. Naturally many members of it came from the immediate neighbourhood, since music-lovers were attracted by the Crystal Palace music to live in Sydenham, Dulwich, Norwood and Anerley, but many more poured into the Crystal Palace by train from London and even further afield. Elgar, as a young man, travelled from as far as Worcester. The seats too were inexpensive - some as cheap as 1/- - while on week-days there were Free Concerts at which the finest classical music - aye, and some of the very newest works - could be heard for nothing. Manns slipped in a little extra rehearsing for novelties (though under non-committal titles!) in this way. How enchanting to hear ^{say} Schubert's music - which Manns adored - ~~and~~ ^{and} the latest works by Richard Strauss, which he disliked, under

such circumstances. Even for the official rehearsals students at the Crystal Palace School of Art were allowed the privilege of serial free tickets. Most generous, far-sighted and courageous of all was Manns's championship of British composers and their works. He cared for them as no-one, British or foreign, had ever done before. He gave early hearings to all the men who led the British Renaissance, also to many whose music had merit though scarcely genius, and he was without the prejudice against women composers which even to-day is hardly dead. A liberal policy too prevailed towards performers. While all the finest foreign artists of the time, including Clara Schumann, Joachim, Sarasate, Ysayë, Rubinstein, Paderewski, Pachmann and George Henschel were regularly engaged, young British singers and instrumentalists were given hearings and re-engaged if they made good. There was scope for all in the Crystal Palace programmes, and the audiences Manns ~~had~~ trained ^{as a matter of course} were capable of sitting through a full two-hour concert without an interval and without smoking. The usual items of a programme, with two artists, were: 1. An Overture. 2. A Concerto. 3. A vocal scena, or songs with orchestra. 5. A Symphony. 6. An instrumental solo or solos. 7. Songs with piano accompaniment. 8. An Overture, or something stirring, such as the Hungarian

March from Berlioz' Faust. Sometimes choral works were given. The choir formed for this purpose was the weak spot in Manns' forces - but it struggled gallantly through thick and thin, from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony to Mendelssohn's Hymn of Praise, from Dvořák's "The Spectre's Bride" to Sullivan's "Golden Legend". Perhaps the most touching proof of Manns' care for British music was that when he celebrated the 40th Anniversary of the Saturday Concerts in October, 1895, he did so with a programme devoted wholly to music by British composers. It is one of the salient facts in our musical history that ^{The two Germans,} Manns at Sydenham, and later on Richter at Manchester and in London, were the foremost champions of British composers at a time when the British public was indifferent, even prejudiced against them, and it is well now to remember and record our debt of gratitude.

As to the educative value of the dear old Philharmonic Society's annual series of orchestral concerts in London, it is ~~not easy~~ ^{difficult} to speak, because the Society, consisting primarily of professional musicians, appealed to the already converted. In the summary of its programmes one finds such items as: "1853. Berlioz conducted his 'Harold in Italy' Symphony"; "1855. Wagner appointed conductor"; "1856. Sterndale Bennett appointed conductor"; "1862. Jubilee season"; "1869. Analytical

programmes (by G.A. Macfarren) introduced"; "1873. Brahms' Requiem, Début of Von Bülow"; ^{which at any rate show} ~~all showing~~ how the Philharmonic kept touch with developments abroad.

The Sacred Harmonic Society, ~~which~~ ^{which} existed, to perform oratorios, functioned from 1832 to 1882. It was essentially an amateur-controlled organisation, and appealed to the essence of Victorianism. The Society showed great enlightenment in the library it amassed, and that collection, later purchased by Sir Augustus Adderley and presented to the Royal College of Music, ^{was} ~~was~~ one of the few great and truly distinguished collections of music in Britain.

Concerts which did for chamber music what the Crystal Palace ones did for orchestral music were the weekly, alternating Monday and Saturday Popular Concerts of beloved memory. Begun in 1858 and continued for forty years under the direction of Arthur Chappell, the policy was to restrict ^{The programmes} ~~them~~ to classical music, to engage artists of the highest standing to perform it, and "to collect a permanent audience from the lovers of music resident in London and the suburbs". What memories the name of the "Pops" conjures up! St. James' Hall, better for sound than any hall in London to-day; the audience, ranging from the élite on green rep sofa stalls to eager students who had queued enthusiastically to enter

Paradise for 1/-.. All of them "dug in" listening, maybe to Madame Norman ~~Nemda~~ ^{NERUDA} or to Joachim leading a Beethoven or Mozart quartet - and how inimitable were his interpretations of these masters! British musicians ^{to} were engaged ~~as~~ as a matter of course, and relations between British and foreign, young and older artists seem to have been singularly happy. Fanny Davies, that splendid young pianist of the later years of the "Pops", made her début there, (as did Leonard Borwick), and played much with Joachim and Piatti ^{whom} ~~she always~~ used to call ~~them~~ "Uncle Joe" and "Uncle Nonno". The concerts ^{generally} ~~usually~~ included a first-rate singer. Analytical programmes were also a feature of the "Pops" ~~and~~ ^{and} furthered their educative value at a time when Radio, gramophone music, L.C.C. lectures on music, and musical appreciation classes were unknown and unthought-of. Altogether the "Pops" deserved the epithet ~~"Incomparable"~~ bestowed on them in Grove's Dictionary. ^{in a sense} ~~of 'incomparable'~~

~~To a considerable degree~~ it was the very success of the Crystal Palace concerts and "Pops" in creating a large public of music-lovers which ultimately brought them to an end, for the increase of other concert organisations, ^{resultant} ~~which~~ ~~resulted~~ from the ever growing interest in music, undermined the support given to the older organisations. Some of the ^{other} ~~new~~ organisations were relatively short-lived, such as the

New Philharmonic Society (1852-1879), the British Orchestral Society (1872-1875), but the Richter Symphony Concerts, begun in 1879, and George Henschel's London Symphony Concerts begun in 1886 were musically notable.

With the splendid exception of Manchester, (where the Gentlemen's Concerts, ^{founded} ~~begun~~ in 1744, continued till 1920, and ~~where~~ ^{formed} ~~founded~~ Sir Charles Hallé the Hallé Orchestra as early as 1857) the principal concerts ~~were~~ centred in London during four of the five decades in the later half of the 19th Century. The Royal Choral Society, ~~which~~ still flourishing, started life in 1872. The Bach Choir, ~~which~~ grew out of a number of amateurs got together in 1875 by A.D. Coleridge (himself an amateur) to study Bach's Mass in B Minor, ~~was~~ ^{Trained} and conducted by Otto Goldschmidt, the husband of Jenny Lind, ~~and~~ it performed the Mass in April, 1876, with such success that the Bach Choir was converted into a permanent organisation. It remains in full being to-day. These ~~two~~ organisations, the Royal Choral Society and the Bach Choir, have been an educative force among amateur singers valuable far beyond the Crystal Palace Handel Festivals, for the works studied and performed have been drawn from the ^{compositions} ~~pieces~~ of many different composers, and the standard expected by the professional musicians who conducted them has been ^{consistently} high, even if the singers

did not always attain it! Other Bach Choirs have sprung up in England following London's lead, *notably one in Oxford.*

In 1878 another valuable work, the People's Concert Society, was started by amateur musicians for giving good chamber music concerts in the poorer parts of London. The performers were either professionals, ~~who~~ *play'ng* for nominal fees, or else amateurs of professional standard. The response and results were so excellent that the concerts continued till 1935. To mingle with the audiences was a fascinating experience. I well remember hearing of a mechanic from Woolwich Arsenal who had become specially devoted to Schubert and ~~had~~ bought miniature scores of his music out of savings from his wages. With beautiful courtesy ~~and without a trace of class-consciousness~~ he offered to share a miniature score of the great D minor quartet, which he said was his favourite, with the lawyer who happened to be sitting next him. What treasures those cheap, buff-coloured little scores of classical music were ~~alike~~ *alike!* to professionals, students and amateurs! They had been instituted by Alfred Payne, son of an Englishman living in Leipzig and - from the point of view of the British Renaissance - were a corollary to the analytical programmes, for here again music was thrown open to all laymen

who knew enough to read notation. Mozart's quartets could be bought for 6d. and 9d., Beethoven's for 9d. and 1/-, even Schubert's Trio in B flat was only 1/-. ^{This} ~~Payne's~~ edition ~~of~~ has now become Eulenburg's.

So many creative uprushes of concert-founding happened in the half century before 1900 that it is impossible to mention all, at any rate here. But the uprushes did tend to happen in alternate decades. Those of the 1850's and the 1870's have already been described; the 1890's furnished others. In 1895 Robert Newman and Henry Wood launched that ~~marvellous~~ ^{wonderful} series of Promenade Concerts which has gone on growing ever since in prestige and popularity, and has ^{now} become almost as characteristic of London as Big Ben. The New Queen's Hall Orchestra followed in 1897. The story of both belongs to a later part of this history, but already in 1895 the vision, enterprise and sterling musicianship of Wood were working at full stretch on the early stages of his prodigious series of concerts wherein entertainment and education were so cannily combined.

A series of concerts ^{certainly} must be mentioned which, though semi-private, played a large part in forwarding the interests of British composers. Here again it was a foreigner, Edward Dannreuther, who instigated them. "Danny", as his colleagues

at the Royal College of Music later affectionately called him, was a pianist, teacher, writer and lecturer, who in 1874 started at his house, 12, Orme Square, Bayswater, a series of chamber concerts which continued till 1893.

They ^{were, and} are notable ~~today~~ because of the first performance at them of many works by Parry, whose genius Dannreuther was quick to recognise and ^{to} aid in a way most helpful to a young composer. For a time Dannreuther's house was a focal point in London music, ~~for~~ ^{and for} besides his work for British music he was a great Wagnerite, and filled much the same rôle towards ^{championing} ~~making known~~ Wagner's music here in the 1870's that

Walter Bache filled towards Liszt, in the 1880's. It was with

Dannreuther that Wagner stayed on his visit in 1877. By an ironic coincidence the only houses demolished ~~by German bombs~~ ^{in Orme Square} during the ¹⁹³⁹⁻⁴⁵ ~~the war~~ ^{by German bombs during the Six Years War} were Nos. 11 and 12 !!

As the Royal Academy of Music was founded in 1822 its early history does not concern this volume. But it is worth remembering that it was to the amateurs, noblemen and gentlemen under the chairmanship of Lord Burghersh, that the R.A.M. owed its inception, even if at the great crisis of its affairs in 1868 it was the professional musicians who saved it from dissolution. All the other great music colleges and associations came into being in the second half of the 19th

Century. ~~Truly~~ ^{Truly} A list of them gives a remarkable view of the strong uprising of the spirit of music throughout the nation:

- 1848. Royal Irish Academy of Music.
- 1854. St. Michael's College, Tenbury.
- 1857. Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall.
- 1872. Trinity College of Music.
- 1876. National Training School of Music, (which became the R.E.M.)
- 1880. Guildhall School of Music.
- 1882. Royal College of Music.
- 1887. Birmingham and Midland Institute School of Music.
- 1890. Glasgow Atheneum School of Music, (now the Scottish National Academy of Music).
- 1893. Royal Manchester College of Music.

Each has contributed something valuable to the British Renaissance in music, but the one which played the largest part is the Royal College of Music. It began life as the National Training School of Music - a scheme first thought of by the Prince Consort in 1854, though not made concrete till 1871, when his son, the Duke of Edinburgh, presided over a meeting at which the foundation was resolved on. The Commissioners of 1851 granted a site on the west of the Royal Albert Hall

(which latter had been opened in 1871) and in connection with the Society of Arts the National Training School of Music began work at Easter, 1876, in a building (now the Royal College of Organists) erected and paid for by Sir Charles Freake (note the amateurs again!). Arthur Sullivan was the first principal, succeeded by Stainer in 1881. In 1882 the still more important scheme for the Royal College of Music was launched by the Prince of Wales, son of the man who had first dreamed of a great teaching institution, and, incredible though it may seem to people who only recall the Prince's boredom at concerts, he flung himself into the project and worked for it with ardour. The National Training School and its building amalgamated with the R.C.M. A proposal to unite the new R.C.M. with the old Royal Academy of Music was however rejected by the R.A.M., a decision of benefit to both in the long run and more than justified by present conditions, when ^{each} ~~both~~ great institutions ^{is} ~~are~~ so full that the problem is how to cope with the wishful entrants. Sir George Grove, ~~who~~ had done outstandingly fine work as Organising Financial Secretary in the campaign to raise funds for the R.C.M., ^{He} ~~was~~ appointed its first Director. No choice could have been happier. Added to his wide culture and passionate love of music he had an almost uncanny instinct in selecting the right people for his

staff. It was due to him that the College thus became from the outset a focal point in the British Renaissance. With Parry, Stanford and Parratt all teaching under one roof, what else could happen! They were themselves a large part of the Renaissance, and the rest of the teaching staff was not unworthy of them. Even Jenny Lind had been persuaded out of her retirement to give lessons to the singers. Small wonder that 1581 entrants competed for the first fifty open free scholarships and that among the winners there were young musicians who later were to play a distinguished part in British music - Hamish MacCunn, S.P. Waddington, Marmaduke Barton, Charles Wood, Emily Daymond (who became the first woman D.Mus. by examination at Oxford) and others.

The Prince of Wales opened the R.C.M. on 6th May, 1883. In his speech there was a passage so prescient that it deserves ~~to be held in~~ perpetual remembrance: "The time has come when class can no longer stand aloof from class, and that man does his duty best who works most earnestly in bridging over the gulf between different classes I claim for music a variety of expression which belongs to no other art, and therefore adapts it more than any other art to produce that union of feeling which I much desire to promote". In conclusion he referred to the R.C.M. as "an institution which I trust will

give to music a new impulse, a glorious future and a national life".

~~The~~ Success ^{came} ~~was~~ swiftly. Before long the building by the Albert Hall proved too small. As early as 1887 the College Council approached the Commissioners of 1851 for a site; in 1888 Mr. Samson Fox of Leeds gave £30,000 towards the building, afterwards adding another £15,000, and in 1894 the new Royal College of Music was opened in Prince Consort Road, where it has survived the perils of two wars. Sir George Grove, having seen his beloved R.C.M. settled in its new home, thereupon resigned and Parry was appointed Director - the best choice possible, for he was a great man, a great musician, and a fine administrator. At the College brilliantly gifted scholars and students continued to arrive, among them William Hurlstone, Coleridge Taylor, R. Vaughan Williams, Gustav Holst, Walford Davies, Harry Colles, Sydney Nicholson, William H. Harris, Thomas Dunhill, Cyril Rootham, Herbert Fryer, Frank Bridge, Leopold Stokowski, George Dyson, Ivor James, Clara Butt, Agnes Nicholls, Hilda and Muriel Foster, May and Beatrice Harrison, Walter Hyde - a battalion of young British artists alight with enthusiasm. Of the R.C.M.'s first 25 years it could truly be said for the pupils:

"Bliss was it then to be alive

And to be young was perfect heaven."

In later times there is pride in maintaining a great tradition, but in building up the musical achievements, prestige and esprit de corps of ^{this} ~~a~~ great institution in the British Renaissance there was a morning glory that only those who experienced it will ever fully understand.

No-one must suppose however that the other great teaching institution was quiescent. Far from it: the Royal Academy of Music was training pupils who were to become famous - Henry J. Wood, Edward German, Lionel Tertis and Arnold Bax among others - and Mackenzie and Parry were working to establish ever truer friendship between the Royal Schools of Music (R.A.M. and R.C.M.). These had already jointly founded in 1889 the Associated Board to hold local examinations throughout the Kingdom, ^{and these} ~~which~~ played a useful part in raising the standard of taste and education.

The Guildhall School of Music, established in the City of London by the Corporation in 1880, aimed most at spreading musical knowledge among the people at large, though it has trained many excellent professionals. It met with a speedy success it has continued to enjoy. During its early years ^{the} ~~its~~ Principals were ^{Thomas Henry} Weist-Hill (1880), Sir Joseph Barnby (1892-6) and Dr. W.H. Cummings, this last a thoughtful and cultured

antiquary as well as musician, who laid the foundations of Purcell research and whose own Purcell collection was unique.

Tonic Sol-fa and Competition Festivals.

One of the most permeating influences in evangelising ordinary people for music throughout the country was the Tonic Sol-fa Association founded in 1853. The movement for choral singing was already strong throughout England and Wales, especially in districts where industrial conditions, fine voices and Nonconformity coincided. John P. Hullah (1812-1884), a very capable musician and something of a pioneer, had ~~already~~ begun notable work in class singing in 1840, followed in 1841 by a school to instruct masters of day and Sunday Schools in vocal music. Hullah used a system founded on that of Wilhem in Paris, and carried on his activities for many years, ending up as H.M. Inspector of Training Schools for the United Kingdom. His system, though valuable, had the drawback of a fixed Doh. John Curwen, a Nonconformist minister with less technical musical training than Hullah but with more acumen, ~~was~~ commissioned by a conference of Sunday School Teachers ~~Nonconformist ministers~~ to investigate

congregational singing and discover the simplest method of teaching singing, saw that the plan invented by a Miss Glover of Norwich, with its movable Doh, was the most practical.

He adopted and developed it; founded the Tonic Sol-fa Association in 1853, ^{the Tonic Sol-fa Competition Festivals in 1860,} the publishing firm of Curwen & Sons in 1863, and the Tonic Sol-fa College in 1879. The effect of the system in stimulating choral singing was immense.

~~His son, John Spencer Curwen, by ^{initiating} the Stratford ^{Festival in 1888,} ~~Competition~~ ^{revived and carried further} ~~started the competitive festival movement~~ ^{carried still further what later became a rule} in England, having borrowed the idea (practical man!) from ~~Welsh Listeddforau~~~~

Executive Artists.

^{In 19th century Britain} The era of the "star" conductor had not dawned; ~~in 19th century Britain~~ but, as seen earlier in this chapter, the three German conductors August Manns, George Henschel and Hans Richter all exercised a great and benevolent influence upon music in Britain and exerted it (especially Manns and Richter) for the ^{furtherance} ~~farthering~~ of works by British composers. Some of the composers were conductors themselves and carried on a good deal of what may be called routine work - among them Sterndale Bennett, Barnby, Mackenzie and Stanford. Only at

the very close of the century did Britain's first famous conductor begin to rise above the horizon - a young Londoner called Henry J. Wood.

Fine singers and instrumentalists however ~~were~~ *abounded*, ~~plentiful~~. In the period 1848 to 1900 British singers had first class voices and knew how to use them: Sims Reeves, Joseph Maas, Edward Lloyd, Ben Davies - all pure tenors; Charles Santley - most famous of 'Elijahs'; Lemmens Sherrington, Emma Albani, Melba of a matchless voice, and, (at the end) Agnes Nicholls, a soprano of purest quality; Antoinette Sterling, Patey, Ada Crossley, Clara Butt with the voice of a century, and (again at the very end) Muriel Foster with her gloriously warm expressive voice and innate musicianship. To hear either Clara Butt or Muriel Foster sing Elgar's Sea Pictures in their early prime was memorable; Clara Butt with her golden high G ringing out in the "Sabbath morning at sea", Muriel Foster with her perfect phrasing (no-one else has ever sung "In haven" or "Where corals lie" with more exquisite poising of the rhythms) or deeper pathos in "The Swimmer". Finest of all in song interpretation though not so gifted in voice was Plunket Greene, a great artist and a great gentleman, for whom Parry and Stanford wrote many of their best songs, a singer who could do what he

international, not an insular, standard of excellence, and of learning the classical heritage of interpretative lore - a very real and precious thing which has twice been broken by great Wars in the 20th Century and never fully repaired. How many people nowadays stop to consider that this tradition is the heritage ~~that forming~~ ^{that forming} the artistic foundation of such admired artists as Artur Schnabel, Kreisler, Bruno Walter and England's own Beecham - a firm base upon which each has developed his own individuality and methods. Fortunately gramophone recordings have come in time to preserve a good deal of their art (though some other opportunities have been irrevocably missed), but nothing can ever recall as a model for young artists the peerless vocalisation of Adelina Patti or the grandeur of Anton Rubinstein as a pianist - "Rubinstein had everything!" Fanny Davies once told the present writer, and she was herself ~~thought easily the greatest pianist of~~ ^{English} ~~her day.~~

Another great keyboard player, though of quite a different kind, was William Thomas Best (1826-1897), an organist with commanding genius and immense prestige as a public player. He did not hesitate to use the resources of the organ to the ~~utmost or to~~ ^{utmost or to} ~~utmost and~~ enlarge the repertory of organ music at his recitals by brilliant arrangements of orchestral works.

pleased with an audience, moving it to delicious laughter or furtive tears. To hear him ~~when in his prime~~ sing Somervell's "Maud" song cycle accompanied by Leonard Borwick was unforgettable.

Britain was fortunate, too, then in instrumentalists. Arabella Goddard was probably over-praised as a pianist, but there could be no doubt of the superlative quality of Eugen d'Albert - a native of Glasgow who betook himself to Germany; Fanny Davies and Leonard Borwick, equally fine as soloists or ensemble players, fundamentally musicians as well as born pianists; and Frederick Lamond, a grand Beethoven player. British string players were not so prominent, though such gifted violinists as Mary Cardew and Emily Shinner, both pupils of Joachim's, might perhaps have made lasting marks had they chosen to remain unmarried, and John Dunn was a gifted but erratic player. ^{It is true that} ~~A~~ great deal of the concert and orchestral work was in the hands of foreigners, but there was something to be said for the free coming and going of famous artists and the natural way in which they and British artists worked together. Racial antagonisms had not invaded 19th Century Britain and the European musical circle was a very pleasant one in which to mingle. Moreover, young executant musicians had the chance of measuring themselves by an

The Amateurs.

English amateurs of music have not had justice done them. So far as I can recall the sole tribute they received (until Mr. Nettel took up the cudgels!) was the remark that they had been responsible for all the important things in English opera. Victorian~~a~~ amateurs have been ~~the~~ most disparaged of all, starting with the Prince Consort and Queen Victoria, continuing with the aristocratic addicts of Italian opera and winding up with the so-called smug middle-classes, the polite givers of musical evenings for themselves and penny readings for the poor, singers of inane ballads and bungling performers of Mendelssohn's lesser instrumental works. Bourgeoise, all of them, in present day jargon. It is high time someone struck a blow in their defence. The more one studies their abilities and activities the more clearly one sees how important the amateurs were in the general development of the British Renaissance. Historians may even yet discover they were as valuable to music as the once-despised earthworm is now found to be in agriculture!

To consider them let us begin with ^{the} ~~A~~ most derided amateur - the Prince Consort. He was, in point of fact, a sincere lover of music with a decent knowledge of it. After his death, and probably for his sake, Queen Victoria kept in

touch with music - aye, and with modern music, though more in a private than a public way. For at a date when Wagner was still caviare to the general, the Queen commanded Albani, the famous Canadian soprano, and Fanny Davies, then a young pianist, to Balmoral, and requested their programme should contain the Liebestod from Wagner's "Tristan and Isolde", still unfamiliar in England. Readers of Dame Ethel Smyth's autobiographical writings will recall how much she - Ethel Smyth - owed to the friendship and help given her by the exiled Empress Eugenie, not to mention others, ~~but~~^{and} in aristocratic circles ~~some~~ really cultured amateurs of music were to be found. In the next generation, Lady Mary Drefusis, an excellent amateur, carried on a beneficent work for music, *and through her love of it her name is enshrined in music forever, for* ~~and~~ she was one of the friends pictured in Elgar's Enigma

Variations.

Turning from ^{circles} ~~the~~ Court to the middle and working classes, one sees, in Victorian England, a perfect network of choral societies cast over the country largely by the efforts of amateurs, with local singers, local conductors and often local orchestras as well - societies capable of putting up sound performances of Handel's "Messiah" or Stanford's "The Revenge" - performances that were the outcome of long study and rehearsal; honest music-making at first hand, and

as such worth more in musicality than a better performance at second hand by radio.

Then there were the more strongly centralised groups of music-lovers. Where choral and orchestral societies formed the groundwork these helped to make the pattern of music in England. Take, for example, the Hovingham Festival. It was founded in 1887 by Canon Thomas Percy Hudson (later Pemberton), rector of the Yorkshire village of Killing, a keen amateur cellist and a passionate lover of music. Another cultivated amateur, Sir William Worsley of Hovingham Hall in the adjoining parish lent the Riding School as the concert room. Yet another amateur, John Rutson of Newby Wiske, put up a large sum of money towards the expenses. Many leading artists of the day took part in the performances, most especially Joachim, and the Festivals, thirteen in all, were uniquely cultured and charming experiences for all who attended them, a delightful example of village democracy in which the big house party, the staff, tenants and surrounding gentry shared.

Another parson with a particular flair for music was the Rev. Walter Moberly, who formed and conducted a large string orchestra of ladies, part professional, part amateur,

in the 1890's. The concert performances reached such excellence that I once heard the late A.H. Fox Strangways, when he was critic of the Observer, ~~say~~ remark after listening to a performance by a wellknown professional string orchestra at Broadcasting House: "Yes, they play *very* well, but I never heard a string orchestra *so* good as Moberly's Ladies Orchestra years ago. These people don't come near them".

While much has been written about the Crystal Palace Saturday Concerts no-one has attempted any serious account of the musicians and music-lovers who lived within that sphere of influence. Yet what a remarkable circle it was!— a series of interlinked groups in which the amateurs played a leading part. There was, of course, Sir George Grove at Sydenham, with his burning love for music and his close association with the Crystal Palace and (presently) with the newly founded Royal College of Music, of which he ^{was} ~~became~~ the first Director. He delighted in taking the students to the Crystal Palace Concerts and in welcoming them into his home. Mr. Littleton, of the great publishing firm of Novello's, was another Sydenham resident. In his house, with its beautiful music room, Liszt stayed in 1886 when his fervent disciple

Walter Bache realised the wish of his heart in seeing Liszt and his music acclaimed in London. There was something most touching in this selfless devotion of the young English professional to the Abbé Liszt (as everyone called him), but Bache was by no means one-idea'd. For some years he conducted a local society of amateur musicians which met regularly for practices at seven different large houses in rotation and thence called itself The Sydenham Hill Septet Society. The performers consisted of a double quartet of singers, among whom as soloists were a Miss Lucy Bell, granddaughter of the famous surgeon Sir Charles Bell and ~~the~~ possessor of a full, ringing soprano voice; a wealthy landscape gardener named Henry Milner, whose tenor voice had a pure silvery timbre seldom heard nowadays; and a most capable bass, Richard Pennington, a busy solicitor (his wife always referred to "the vast machinery of my husband's business") who became President of the Law Society, but who found time nevertheless to be an enthusiastic member of the Noblemen's and Gentlemen's Catch Club. The pianist in the Sydenham Hill Septet Society was another legal man who ultimately became Master of the City of London Solicitors Company - Sydney Charles Scott. What staggers one, even now, is the selection

of big works they performed - including Bach's St. Matthew Passion Music and Mozart's "Don Giovanni."

Chamber music was warmly supported by amateurs in the district, who also often entertained and played with professional musicians. Among these the names of Captain Beaumont, Baron Knoop, Mr. Rüffer (if memory is right) and Mr. W.W. Cobbett, who ^{all had held regular} ~~had weekly~~ chamber music parties, were familiar. Then too, there was the Dehneke family at Denmark Hill, the Gates family at Gipsy Hill (where the second daughter, Cecilia, who was a remarkably fine viola player, ^{and} adopted music as her profession); the Fox family at (I think) Sylvan Hill or Fox Hill, and on Beulah Hill, General Chamier, a veteran of the Indian Mutiny, a devoted cellist, who held Trio practices at his house every Tuesday afternoon; and, of course, the Burknall family who still carry on their own house music tradition. One and all were warm with the love for chamber music, but W.W. Cobbett, whose enthusiasm sprang into existence as a boy when he heard Joachim lead Beethoven's A minor quartet, Op.132, had it in excelsis. As a result he laboured tirelessly in the cause of British chamber music, and many fine works were composed in response to his Prize Competitions. There were too his prizes and awards for the

performance of chamber music, the two monumental volumes of his Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music, and his Cobbett Free Library of British Chamber Music which he founded and bequeathed to the Society of Women Musicians, which now administers it. Many of these benefactions were made in the present century, but they were the outcome of a long lifetime of devotion, for in his liberal mind and unquestioning uprightness of character W.W. Cobbett belonged to the Victorian era in which ^{in 1847} he was born, ~~in 1847~~.

As may be supposed, this Crystal Palace circle provided a terrain favourable to composition, and towards the close of the century the composers appeared: Ernest Walker, William Yates Hurlstone and Coleridge Taylor - all men who gave to British music things we would not willingly lose, though they can only be mentioned here in passing, as their main work was done after 1900.

~~This~~ ^{The} Crystal Palace set has never received anything like the attention bestowed on the Kensington set. For one thing the Kensington set was more homogeneous, socially more brilliant and far more exclusive; for another, it was more closely interwoven with famous professional musicians, painters and writers. A set hard to get into, but fascinating when there, with the parties and private concerts in the studios

of famous artists or fine Kensington drawing rooms, and the talk of widely cultured men and women. Probably the set's biggest concrete service to British music was the formation of the Bach Choir, but members of some of the families specially associated with the set: the Coleridges, Macmillans, Muir Mackenzies, McEwen, Richmonds, became intimately associated with the Royal College of Music and gave many kindnesses to the students as well as benefactions to the College. Though a little later in date, a great amateur, Lord Palmer, by his benefactions did for British music, musicians and opera more than anyone had ever given before.

Canon Francis William Galpin (1858-1945), a man beloved for his goodness of character and fineness of mind, was, among other attainments, a distinguished amateur of music with a world-wide reputation as an authority on musical instruments and the music of ancient civilisations.

The Rev. Dr. Edmund Horace Fellowes (1870) is an unsurpassed expert in 16th Century music - an amateur in name only - who by his tireless researches, profound learning and devoted enthusiasm has given back to England and the world the heritage of Elizabethan music in its full glory and all its forms. Though the main part of his work has been carried out

in the 20th Century its foundation was laid in the 19th, when he was influenced by the high musical ideals of the great artists whom he heard at the "Pops", and more especially ^{by} Joachim and his quartet.

Another amateur who did grand work (as already mentioned) was Augusta Mary Wakefield ~~(1855-1920)~~, ^a the singer of professional standard who became ~~the singer and~~ leader of the Competitive Festival Movement. Altogether this account of the amateurs, long though it be, is still too short to do them justice. They were the invincible rank and file of the British Renaissance.

Learned Societies and Writers on Music.

Looking along the decades of the 19th Century one sees that a new impulse towards research and serious writing in music became evident about 1840, ^{because} ~~when~~ "The Musical Antiquarian Society" was formed ^{then} [^] "for the publication of scarce and valuable works by the early British composers". Dr. E.F. Rimbault and Sir George Macfarren were leading spirits in this enterprise, which published nineteen volumes in its seven years of existence. If the scholarship brought to bear on them by the various editors was not up to present-

day standards, the point is that a good project had been undertaken and carried out as well as the knowledge then existing allowed.

In 1845 a musical biography was published which is still one of the best of its kind: "The Life of Mozart", by Edward Holmes. Here was a writer who united love for truth with intuitive imagination; careful accuracy with charm of style in statement.

Translations by Lady Wallace of the letters and biographies of various great musicians appeared in the 1860's. Though not remarkably well done, they met and stimulated the growing interest in the great composers.

George Hogarth (1783-1870), father-in-law of Charles Dickens, was a music-critic of ability; Henry Fothergill Chorley (1808-1872) of "The Athenaeum" and J.W. Davidson of "The Times" occupied leading positions and were thoughtful critics who commanded attention for music, though their views have not all stood the test of time. J.A. Fuller Maitland, music-critic of "The Times" from ^{1889 to 1911}, was a well-equipped musician in his own right - something of a "flyer" on the harpsichord, and his authority was considerable. It was out

of the surging energy of the 1870's that the Musical (now Royal Musical) Association was formed in 1874 on the initiative

of Sir John Stainer and Sir Frederick Gore-Ouseley, for "the investigation and discussion of subjects connected with the Science and Art of Music". Broadly speaking, the R.M.A. aims to be for music what the Royal Society is for Science, and its prestige abroad is considerable. The papers read to the Association and printed in the Proceedings form a valuable storehouse of expert knowledge on a multiplicity of musical subjects. The Association ~~brought~~ made a real contribution to the Musical Renaissance, but though its own influence was naturally limited to a select circle the writings on music of two of its most distinguished members reached and strongly persuaded a wide public: Parry's "Studies of Great Composers" (1886) was a revelation to the young folk for whom it was intended; his "Art of Music" (1893) was - and remains - a masterly survey of the development of the art itself.

No account of the growth of the British Renaissance would be complete without a clear picture of that man of many gifts, William Henry (later Sir Henry) Hadow (1859-1937). It is hard to say whether he was more scholar, educationist or musician. He passed through a series of important academic appointments at Oxford, ultimately becoming Principal of Armstrong College, Newcastle-on-Tyne, and, in 1919, Vice-

Chancellor of Sheffield University. He found time to study music with great thoroughness at home and abroad, was a notable lecturer upon music, a composer of no mean ability (as anyone may know who looks at his songs) and a writer on music with a knowledge as deep as his expositions were clear and attractive. When his "Studies in Modern Music" (1st series 1892, 2nd series 1894) came out they attracted keen attention and admiration; there followed his "Primer of Sonata Form" (1896) and a book on Haydn and folksong called "A Croatian Composer". Both broke fresh ground. Hadow's analysis of sonata form as being ternary, not binary, was unorthodox but very musical; his theories of Haydn's Croatian origin, based on Kuhac's researches, roused considerable interest but have recently been countered by Dr. Ernst Schmidt's exhaustive investigations. Hadow's editorship of the Oxford History of Music, and his own volume "The Viennese Period" were distinguished. He had the sort of sensitive intuition which was somewhat rare in writers on music at that time, and the prophetic peroration which closed his essay on "Music and Musical Criticism" in 1892 is so remarkable that it deserves to be far better known than it is for its bearing on the British Renaissance.

"Now, at last, the period of our decadence is ended", wrote Hadow; "there has arisen among us a Composer who is capable of restoring our national music to its true place in the art of Europe. Under his guidance, and by his example, it is still possible that we may rise to the position which we occupied in the time of Elizabeth, and show ourselves once more the worthy comrade and rival of the great nations overseas If only the work can be turned in the right direction, if only it can follow the broad, healthy utterance of our national melodies, instead of diverging to copy the phraseology of an alien tongue, if only it will be true and honest and single-hearted, then there is no reason why it should not recover the glory that it has attained in past days The day of England's Music is near at hand. Even now the first blow has been struck, the first victory achieved. Let us shake off the mental indolence which shrinks from the trouble of a decision; let us form our judgement by a study of the great Masters, and apply it to a generous appreciation of the Art of our own day; let us find our pleasure where it is purest and most enduring, and it will be added to our reward that we should share in the winning of a national cause."

Hadow lived long enough to see his prophecy fulfilled ,
~~by the advent of other great British composers.~~

Folk Song.

The folk song movement, as such, came only after the British Renaissance was well under way, but it had cropped up sporadically at more than one point during the 19th Century. Thomson's Collections of National Song, begun in 1802 and continued at intervals till 1841, were a case in point. If not very characteristically national, since their accompaniments were arranged by - among others - Haydn and Beethoven, yet in a sense the balance was redressed by the many sets of verses written for them by Burns.

William Power, of Dublin, obviously fired with the idea of doing for Ireland what Thomson was doing for Scotland, secured Thomas Moore as his collaborator. Moore delved into Edward Bunting's collections of Irish airs published in 1796 and 1807 for the tunes; and for the words he himself supplied poems which have since become part of Ireland's national life. These famous "Irish Melodies" appeared at intervals between 1807-8 and 1834.

So far no-one had seemed to think of England until William Chappell (1809-1888), an enlightened partner in the firm of Chappell & Co., extended his interest in English Madrigalian and Lutenist music to a "Collection of National English Airs" which he edited and published in 1838-40,

afterwards expanding it into his "Popular Music of the Olden Time" in 1855-59. This ranked, and still ranks as a standard work. Meantime, the Rev. John Broadwood, a member of the Broadwood family (the oldest firm of keyboard instrument makers in existence), "one of the earliest collectors of English folk-song in the modern spirit" had noted down traditional tunes sung in Surrey and Sussex and published them in 1843. His niece, Lucy Broadwood, a remarkably able, gifted woman, not only carried on his work but became an enthusiastic folk-song collector and was largely instrumental in founding the Folk-Song Society. Her volume of "English County Songs" published in collaboration with J.A. Fuller-Maitland in 1893 is now a classic. Another pioneer collector was the Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould, who noted and published, together with the Rev. H. Fleetwood Shephard, "Songs and Ballads of the West" (1889-91) and "A Garland of Country Song" (1894). Nor must Frank Kidson (1855-1926), one of the earliest scientific collectors of folk-song, be forgotten.

But the man who above all others saved English folk-song and folk-dance for the nation, and put the crowning achievement on the Folk-song movement here was a Londoner, Cecil James Sharp (1859-1929), who, after an excellent

academic training, went to Australia, whence he returned and became Principal of the Hampstead Conservatoire in 1896. In 1899 he spent Christmas at Headington near Oxford, and on Boxing Day the traditional Headington Morris Dancers, by a most unusual happening, came round and danced in the garden of the house where Sharp was staying. "I walked to the window, and the entire course of my life was changed. I saw that here was a whole art", he once told the present writer. To the recovery, restoration and recording of Folk-song and Folk-dance Sharp thenceforward devoted himself with an ardour no discouragements could damp, and with a dogged endurance of toil and hardships that was the more amazing because he was by no means physically robust. His researches carried him even into the Appalachian Mountains. More than any other man he gave back to England her heritage of folk-song and folk-dance, and Cecil Sharp House, the headquarters of the movement and the home of his library, is a noble outcome of his labours and his living monument. Folk-song definitely became a part of the British Renaissance.

Popular Music.

The popular music of a period is a sort of passport photograph of its everyday appearance. The Victorian songs

which racketted round the Music Halls and perambulated the streets on barrel organs had a punch and vitality, an irrepressible tunefulness, that ~~by now~~ one looks back upon *by now* with a certain envy from the present time when the tunes are simply another manifestation of the contemporary curse of propaganda (or "proper-gander" as ~~a lady once inadvertently~~ *school children so often innocently* mis-spell it!) whereby the principle of repetition is used until anything, however silly, is believed because it is heard so often. Jazz, swing and crooning tunes are largely based on this kind of repetition. They sound ~~an~~ ^{when} anaemic set against such stirring, ~~even~~ if slightly vulgar, Victorian things as "Soldiers of the Queen", "Ta-ra-ra boom-de-ay", "The man who broke the bank at Monte Carlo" and "Daisy, Daisy", while "Knocked 'em in the Old Kent Road" is a rattling good tune, better than one of Tschaikowsky's little pieces to which it bears a whimsical, and of course wholly accidental, resemblance.

Taken for all in all, Victorian popular music towards the end of the 19th Century tingled with vitality and tunefulness, and even the ballads ~~then~~, which served the more ~~select~~ ^{select} folk in suburban drawing rooms, ~~seem robust now by comparison with contemporary crooning~~, though despised then by the truly musical, *seem robust now when compared with contemporary croonings.*

Coda.

Pausing for a moment at the year 1900 to gaze retrospectively along the road travelled from 1848 one's glance rests finally upon a strange little prophet - none other than Punch, ~~that~~ quite a young paper but even then a quintessential expression of the British spirit. Mr Punch had greeted the New Year of 1848 with an editorial that is worth ~~remembering~~ ^{recalling} for it contained the following words: 'I will' cried Punch 'put forth a Charter for all human kind. A Charter of One Point, and it is - Let every man, rich or poor, strong or feeble, high and low, let every man do one thing, and that shall ~~be~~ be sufficient to all things - LET HIM DO HIS BEST. "

Looking back at what was accomplished in British music during the fifty-two years from 1848 to 1900 who could doubt that British musicians had indeed done their best, and that the Renaissance of music, which at the half century had been but 'a budding morrow in midnight' had by its end become the glowing reality of a dream come true.